

# AFTER PLACEMENT OF DENTAL IMPLANTS

## Immediately Following Surgery

- Do not disturb the wound. There may be a metal healing abutment protruding through the gingival (gum) tissue.
- Vigorous mouth rinsing or touching the wound area following surgery should be avoided. This may initiate bleeding by causing the blood clot that has formed to become dislodged.
- Unless otherwise instructed, take your first dose of ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) 400 mg (2 tablets) before the local anesthesia wears off to decrease the initial pain. If you feel it is necessary, you may take the prescribed pain medication.
- If it is necessary to take a prescription medication for pain, you may take it in conjunction with the ibuprofen or staggered with the ibuprofen.
- Place ice packs to the sides of your face where surgery was performed. Refer to the section on Swelling for an explanation.
- Restrict your activities the day of surgery and resume normal activity when you feel comfortable.
- If you have a prosthetic device (flipper, partial, or dentures) we will advise you on specific instructions for your particular case, on when and how often you should or should not be using these devices.

## Bleeding

Some bleeding or redness in the saliva is normal for 24 hours. Excessive bleeding (your mouth fills up rapidly with blood) can be controlled by biting on a gauze pad placed directly on the bleeding wound for 30 minutes. If bleeding continues, please call for further instructions.

## Swelling

Swelling is a normal occurrence after surgery. To minimize swelling, apply an ice bag, or a plastic bag, or towel filled with ice on the cheek in the area of surgery. Apply the ice continuously, as often as possible, for the first 36 hours.

## Diet

Drink plenty of fluids. Avoid hot liquids or food. Soft food and liquids should be eaten on the day of surgery. Return to a normal diet as soon as possible unless otherwise directed.

## Pain

For moderate pain, ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) 400mg (2 tablets) should be taken every three to four hours on a regular schedule. By taking this pain medication regularly and keeping the blood levels constant, the medication can work better and often less prescription narcotic pain medicine is necessary.

If you cannot take ibuprofen, you can take two, regular strength (325mg) acetaminophen (Tylenol), or one extra strength (500mg) every three to four hours, keeping in mind that no more than 4 grams may be take in 48 hours. The prescription medication may have some of this medication in it as well, and should be taken into account.

For severe pain, take the tablets prescribed as directed. The prescribed pain medicine will make you groggy and will slow down your reflexes. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery.

Avoid alcoholic beverages. You may take the prescription medicine it in conjunction with the ibuprofen or staggered with the ibuprofen.

Pain or discomfort following surgery should subside more and more every day. If pain persists, it may require attention and you should call the office.

## **Discoloration**

In some cases, discoloration of the skin follows swelling. The development of black, blue, green, or yellow discoloration is due to blood spreading beneath the tissues. This is a normal postoperative occurrence, which may occur two to three days post-operatively. Moist heat applied to the area may speed up the removal of the discoloration.

## **Antibiotics**

Antibiotics are not routinely prescribed, but if you have been placed on antibiotics, take the tablets or liquid as directed. Antibiotics will be given to help prevent infection. Discontinue antibiotic use in the event of a rash or other unfavorable reaction. Call the office if you have any questions.

## **Oral Hygiene**

Good oral hygiene is essential to good healing. The night of surgery, if prescribed, use the Chlorhexadine Oral Rinse before bed. The day after surgery, the Chlorhexadine should be used twice daily, after breakfast and before bed. Be sure to rinse for at least 30 seconds then spit it out. Warm salt-water rinses (one teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) should be used at least four to five times a day, as well, especially after meals. Brushing your teeth with the healing abutments is not a problem. Be gentle initially when brushing the surgical areas.

**REMEMBER:** A clean wound heals better and faster.

## **Activity**

Keep physical activities to a minimum immediately following surgery. If you are considering exercise, throbbing or bleeding may occur. If this occurs, you should discontinue exercising. Keep in mind that you are probably not taking normal nourishment. This may weaken you and further limit your ability to exercise.

## **Wearing Your Prosthesis**

Wearing of partial dentures, flippers, or full dentures after surgery will vary by patient. Please be sure to clarify with the doctor when you can wear your prosthesis. This is commonly discussed in the preoperative consultation.

## **Finally**

Sutures are placed in the area of surgery to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing. Sometimes they become dislodged. This is no cause for alarm. Just remove the suture from your mouth and discard it. If the sutures are not the dissolvable type, they will be removed approximately one week after surgery. The removal of sutures requires no anesthesia or needles. It takes only a minute or so, and there is no discomfort associated with this procedure. So its really nothing to worry about.

Your case is individual. No two mouths are alike. Do not accept well-intended advice from friends. Discuss your problem with the persons best able to effectively help you: Dr. Chuck and Dr. Brian.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call the office. Please try to call during office hours, however a 24-hour answering service is available for after hours contact with a doctor.